



## Audit and Standards Advisory Committee

23 July 2025

### Report from the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources

Deputy Leader and Cabinet  
Member for Finance and Resources  
– Cllr Mili Patel

## Progress on implementation of CIPFA Financial Management Code

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	ALL
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	KEY
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	OPEN
<b>List of Appendices:</b>	None
<b>Background Papers:</b>	None
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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. On 6 February 2024, this committee received a report entitled *CIPFA Financial Management Code and Redmond Review – Update Report* which set out progress to that date on a programme of works that the council was undertaking to improve its financial management.
- 1.2. The February 2024 report provided a review of the outcome of the work to implement CIPFA's Financial Management (FM) Code and the committee noted that the conclusion to this work had been completed at that date.
- 1.3. However, Financial Management is a dynamic task and Brent Council is committed to maintaining the highest standards of Financial Management. This means ensuring that the Council continues to always align with the FM Code. This report provides the committee with an update on the progress of that work.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to:

- 2.1. Note the content of this report and its conclusion that the Council's financial management is aligned with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

## 3. Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1. The CIPFA Financial Management code underpins all aspects of financial management within the Council which enables the delivery of the priorities and objectives within the Borough Plan.

## 4. CIPFA Financial Management Code

*What is it?*

- 4.1. CIPFA created the Financial Management (FM) Code to consolidate existing requirements and create a new best practice context underpinned by the tenet that good financial management is an essential element of good governance and longer-term service planning, which are critical in ensuring that local service provision is sustainable. The CIPFA FM Code is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The FM Code sets out the standards of financial management for local authorities.
- 4.2. The FM Code has several components, including the CIPFA Statement of Principles of Good Financial Management. These six principles (Table 1) are the benchmarks against which all financial management should be judged. To enable authorities to test their conformity with the six principles, the FM Code translates these principles into 17 financial management standards (FMS) (Table 2), which form the essence of what needs to be implemented.

Table 1: CIPFA Principles of Good Financial Management

Principle	Description
Leadership	Demonstrating a clear strategic direction based on a vision in which financial management is embedded into organisational culture.
Accountability	Based on medium-term financial planning that drives the annual budget process supported by effective risk management, quality supporting data and whole life costs.
Transparency	Using consistent, meaningful and understandable data, reported frequently with evidence of periodic officer action and elected member decision making.
Standards	Adherence to professional standards is promoted by the leadership team and is evidenced.
Assurance	Sources of assurance are recognised as an effective tool mainstreamed into financial management, including political scrutiny and the results of external audit, internal audit and inspection.

Sustainability	The long-term sustainability of local services is at the heart of all financial management processes and is evidenced by prudent use of public resources.
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Table 2: CIPFA Financial Management Standards

Standard	Description
	<b>Section 1: The responsibilities of the chief finance officer and leadership team</b>
A	The leadership team is able to demonstrate that the services provided by the authority provide value for money.
B	The authority complies with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government.
	<b>Section 2: Governance and financial management style</b>
C	The leadership team demonstrates in its actions and behaviours responsibility for governance and internal control.
D	The authority applies the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016).
E	The financial management style of the authority supports financial sustainability.
	<b>Section 3: Long to medium-term financial management</b>
F	The authority has carried out a credible and transparent financial resilience assessment.
G	The authority understands its prospects for financial sustainability in the longer term and has reported this clearly to members.
H	The authority complies with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
I	The authority has a rolling multi-year medium-term financial plan consistent with sustainable service plans.
	<b>Section 4: The annual budget</b>
J	The authority complies with its statutory obligations in respect of the budget setting process.
K	The budget report includes a statement by the chief finance officer on the robustness of the estimates and a statement on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.
	<b>Section 5: Stakeholder engagement and business plans</b>

L	The authority has engaged where appropriate with key stakeholders in developing its long-term financial strategy, medium-term financial plan and annual budget.
M	The authority uses an appropriate documented option appraisal methodology to demonstrate the value for money of its decisions.
	<b>Section 6: Monitoring financial performance</b>
N	The leadership team takes action using reports enabling it to identify and correct emerging risks to its budget strategy and financial sustainability.
O	The leadership team monitors the elements of its balance sheet that pose a significant risk to its financial sustainability.
	<b>Section 7: External financial reporting</b>
P	The chief finance officer has personal and statutory responsibility for ensuring that the statement of accounts produced by the local authority complies with the reporting requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.
Q	The presentation of the final outturn figures and variations from budget allows the leadership team to make strategic financial decisions.

- 4.3. The following sections provide an update on Brent's progress against these standards.

*The responsibilities of the chief finance officer and leadership team*

- 4.4. Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice, the Council's external auditors are required to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- 4.5. At the Full Council meeting of 27 February 2025 (the meeting at which the 2025/26 Budget and Council Tax were agreed), the Council's external auditor's annual report on value for money as part of the 2023/24 audit of the year end accounts was presented. Prior to the Full Council meeting, the annual report was subject to consideration by this committee.
- 4.6. The external auditor assesses the value for money against three criteria. On Governance and Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness, the auditor's judgement was that there were no significant weaknesses identified, but improvement recommendations were made (unchanged from 2022/23). On Financial Sustainability, one significant weakness was raised in respect of ensuring the Council does not continue its use of reserves to meet unplanned expenditure and other improvement recommendations.
- 4.7. In the 2025/26 Budget agreed at the same meeting as the report was presented, the Council took the difficult decisions recommended in the external auditor's report to ensure that a realistic budget for 2025/26 could be set. This included

requiring services to deliver £8.9m of savings and £6.5m of operating efficiencies in 2025/26, along with changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme, which delivered a further £5m saving for the Council in 2025/26. These savings and the additional income from increasing Council Tax by 4.99% (the maximum allowable without requiring a referendum), allowed the Council to provide growth for the ongoing pressures, including £11.6m for the homelessness budget, which was experiencing the largest overspends in prior years. However, through the Medium-Term Financial Strategy forecasts, it was also determined that there was a further £28m gap between 2026/27 and 2028/29. In the absence of additional funding, the Council will pursue further savings to ensure that realistic budgets can be set for these financial years.

4.8. Taken together, the Council has addressed the immediate concerns of the external auditor in the area of financial sustainability and no significant weaknesses were identified against the other criteria, meaning that the Council has demonstrated that the services provided by the authority provide value for money, albeit with improvements to be made, which are addressed in more detail in Section Five.

4.9. The CIPFA Statement on the role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government states the following:

The chief financial officer (CFO) in a public service organisation:

- is a key member of the leadership team, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the authority's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest.
- must be actively involved in, and able to bring influence to bear on, all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered, and alignment with the authority's financial strategy.
- must lead the promotion and delivery by the whole authority of good financial management so that public money is safeguarded at all times and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively.

To deliver these responsibilities, the chief financial officer:

- must lead and direct a finance function that is resourced to be fit for purpose.
- must be professionally qualified and suitably experienced.

4.10. At Brent, the chief financial officer (CFO) is the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources, who sits on the Council's Corporate Management Team, recognising the vital role that Finance plays in the strategic direction of the Council. All Council reports contain a financial considerations section as a standing item, which ensures that any material decisions taken within the Council, which have a financial implication, are signed off by either the CFO or an officer with authority delegated to them by the CFO to make such determinations on their behalf.

4.11. The CFO is a CIPFA qualified accountant with many years of experience at all levels of the Finance team at Brent. They are supported in promoting good financial management across the Council by the Deputy Director, Corporate and Financial Planning and the Deputy Director, Investment and Infrastructure, with

Heads of Finance reporting to them, who provide strategic support to each Corporate Director and a Chief Accountant responsible for ensuring that the Council complies with external reporting requirements and maintaining strong internal controls. Each Head of Finance is further supported by a team of Senior Finance Analysts, Finance Analysts and Assistant Accountants, who provide business partnering support to all parts of the Council.

*Governance and financial management style*

- 4.12. Responsibility for good governance rests with the leadership team. The team must ensure that there are proper arrangements in place for governance and financial management. These arrangements are laid out in detail in the Council's constitution, which is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains up-to-date, with all changes to the constitution being agreed at a meeting of Full Council. The constitution is a public document, ensuring that the residents are able to hold the Council to account for the decisions that they take.
- 4.13. In addition to the CFO, the following statutory officers also play a key role in good governance and financial management:
- The Chief Executive is the head of paid service, responsible for the proper recruitment and organisation of a local authority's staff.
  - The Director of Law is the monitoring officer, with a specific duty to ensure that the council, its officers and its elected members maintain the highest standards of conduct in all they do.
- 4.14. The constitution also includes a clear scheme of delegation, which sets out the responsibilities that are delegated to the Corporate Directors of each service area. This delegation ensures that the managers who are responsible for the delivery of services are also explicitly held responsible for the financial management of those services. Regular meetings of the Corporate Management Team are held to ensure that these responsibilities are discharged collectively.
- 4.15. In addition to this, the Council has two committees – the audit committee and this committee, which provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements to provide assurance and confidence to those charged with governance. The committees also jointly produce an annual report to Full Council.
- 4.16. The Council has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector. The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance arrangements are based on the seven core principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework. These arrangements are set out in full in the Council's Annual Governance Statement 2024/25, which was approved by the Audit and Standards Committee on 16 June 2025.
- 4.17. CIPFA believes that the strength of financial management within an organisation can be assessed by a hierarchy of three financial management styles', which map loosely to the 3 Es:
- Delivering accountability (Economy).
  - Supporting performance (Efficiency).

- Enabling transformation (Effectiveness).

- 4.18. Brent Council has maintained a balanced budget despite the necessary requirement to make savings of £238m since 2010. Implementing such severe cuts, whilst maintaining the key services that residents rely upon has required difficult decisions to be made, but this has been possible due to the support from all areas of the Council for strong financial management.
- 4.19. The Finance team continues to support the Council's services in reducing expenditure, generating additional income and transforming services so that the Council is able to spend the limited resources available in a more economical way – making the funding stretch further. In recent years, this has included expenditure controls to ensure that non-essential expenditure is restricted. But this is becoming increasingly difficult as costs and demand increase and the available funding does not keep pace.
- 4.20. The Council has implemented a Budget Assurance Panel to provide additional oversight and scrutiny of its financial position, including in-year budget pressures and issues, mitigating actions and the delivery of agreed savings. Actions are focussed on improving forecasting techniques for quantifying anticipated demographic and inflationary growth in the medium-term and addressing longer term issues by increasing supply, shaping market prices, managing demand side issues and investing in prevention measures as a means to avoid later high cost intervention. The actions taken as a result of the Budget Assurance Panel are supporting the performance of the Council by maximising the output from the services the Council provides with the funding available, helping to make the Council more efficient and productive.
- 4.21. Finally, the Council recognises that the risk to the Council's MTFS that now exists, including a c.£30m budget gap over three years and the uncertainty arising from the local government funding reforms, which are currently out for consultation, demands transformation. The Council is aiming to deliver this transformation through the Embrace Change Portfolio.
- 4.22. The Embrace Change Portfolio, is designed to harness our strengths, focus our ambitions, and ensure that as an organisation we improve and evolve to tackle current and emerging challenges in meeting the needs of our local communities. The Portfolio is structured into change programmes, change projects, and enablers, underpinned by a number of principles. At the heart, we are developing a culture that enables us to work much more collaboratively with each other, with partners, and, crucially, with our residents, establishing a real sense of place.
- 4.23. The Embrace Change Portfolio is a key component of the Council's response to the financial challenges and delivering on the actions agreed following the Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC), which was undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) in January 2025.
- 4.24. A CPC is a highly valued improvement and assurance tool that is delivered by the sector for the sector. It is available, at no cost, to all English councils wherever they are on the improvement spectrum and involves a diverse team of experienced peers comprising senior local government councillors and officers.
- 4.25. The peer team undertake a review of key finance, performance and governance information and then spend up to four days at the council to provide robust, strategic, and credible challenge and support.

- 4.26. The Corporate Peer Challenge found that Brent has a strong record of financial stewardship, demonstrated through the successful delivery of savings and effective financial controls. However, rising demand pressures – particularly in temporary accommodation and social care – have made delivering balanced budgets increasingly challenging. Large overspends experienced over the last three years have been managed through the use of reserves, but this approach has led to a significant depletion of general fund reserve levels in recent years. As a result, the council is now exposed to a higher degree of risk, with external auditors highlighting this as a significant financial weakness.
- 4.27. Therefore, there are three financial actions agreed as part of the Corporate Peer Challenge:
- To develop a long-term financial strategy that aligns with the Council's corporate priorities and the embrace change programme;
  - To rebuild reserves to a sustainable level; and
  - To enhance its organisation grip on issues such as debt recovery and council tax collection rates.

*Long to medium-term financial management*

- 4.28. To assess how well the Council can manage these ongoing risks, the Council's Internal Audit team undertook a review using elements of the CIPFA Financial Management model. The review focused on three key areas of financial resilience:
- Adequacy of reserves.
  - Effectiveness of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and quality of underlying assumptions.
  - Capacity to withstand financial shocks.
- 4.29. The overarching aim was to evaluate the Council's ability to maintain robust financial health in a volatile environment. The review comprised two parts: a self-assessment by the Finance team against CIPFA criteria and a workshop to validate and refine those insights. The findings of the report are discussed in more detail in the Medium-Term Financial Outlook report due to be presented to Cabinet on 28 July 2025.
- 4.30. The review concluded with the following statement: "The Council has demonstrated a structured approach to financial management, evidenced by established modelling practices, clear reserve categorisation, and alignment of budgets with strategic objectives. However, continued pressures in key services, as well as external funding uncertainties, highlight the need to increase reserves and consider the areas set out in this report to further strengthen the Council's ability to respond to a financial shock". The recommended actions from the review are set out in section five.
- 4.31. The Council also engaged Oliver Wyman to conduct a critical friend review of Brent Council's current financial forecasting capabilities. The review found that the MTFS is serving its intended purpose of enabling the setting of annual budgets and spending plans, but identified a few opportunities for improvement:
- Sharing of best practices for financial modelling between teams.



- More clearly defined process for scenario planning to ensure consistency across plans feeding into the MTFS.
  - Testing of alternative forecasting techniques for areas with most material impact.
  - Stronger controls over the data being inputted into the MTFS – less reliance on input from individuals, more consistent use of data sources.
  - Definition and documentation of governance around the MTFS, roles and responsibilities and the underlying models.
- 4.32. Alongside the budget report each year, Brent presents a revised Capital Strategy, which sets out how the Council complies with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 4.33. Throughout the financial year, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is updated based on the latest available data. Workshops are undertaken with the service area finance teams to align the MTFS with sustainable service plans and assumptions on funding and economic variables (e.g. inflation, interest rates) are adjusted following external announcements, such as central government fiscal events. Reports on the MTFS position are brought to Cabinet at least three times a year – an update on the Medium-Term outlook in July, the draft budget in November and the final budget in February.
- 4.34. This provides a strong reporting framework in which regular updates on the financial sustainability of the Council are provided. In recent years, the uncertainty in local government funding has made providing a long-term view difficult, but the recently announced Fair Funding Review and multi-year local government finance settlement from 2026/27 should provide greater certainty. In particular, a multi-year settlement covering the full period of the MTFS would create a foundation for extending the medium-term outlook out to five years, which could be used to inform a long-term financial strategy.

#### *The annual budget*

- 4.35. Before each financial year, usually in late February, the Council presents the Budget and Council Tax report to Full Council. This ensures that the Council complies with the statutory requirement to set the budget and Council Tax for the following financial year before 11<sup>th</sup> March. The statutory obligations in regard to the setting of the budget, calculation of Council Tax and consultation requirements are multiple and varied. However, all Council reports with a legal implication must be signed off by the Monitoring Officer. In the case of the Budget and Council Tax report, the advice from the Monitoring Officer is included as an appendix, which sets out how the statutory obligations have been discharged.
- 4.36. Prior to this, the Council publishes its proposed process, including timescales for meetings and consultation as part of the medium-term outlook report in July. This is also subject to advice from the monitoring officer. The Chief Executive, CFO and monitoring officer work closely together throughout the financial year to ensure that all obligations are discharged in full and on time.
- 4.37. The budget report also includes a statement by the chief finance officer on the robustness of the estimates and a statement on the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves as a standing item each year. These sections discharge the

duties required by Section 25 of Local Government Act 2003. As the financial environment in which Brent Council operates has become increasingly volatile in recent years and unexpected overspends have resulted in a reduction in the Council's reserves, the importance of this statement has increased and will continue to increase in the coming years.

*Stakeholder engagement and business plans*

- 4.38. In developing the annual budget, the Council has a well established process for consulting on the budget. Prior to the commencement of the formal consultation on the budget, the Council presents an update on the medium-term financial outlook in July. This is presented to Cabinet and members of the public can scrutinise the Council's financial position and medium-term plans.
- 4.39. Between November and January each year, the Council runs a broad consultation process on the budget proposals for the following year. This includes:
- An invite to residents and businesses to provide comments and feedback through the online consultation portal
  - Five Brent Connects events, where people can attend and engage directly with the Council on the budget proposals
  - Newsletter sent to a large number of Brent businesses
  - Invitations to participate sent to Community and Voluntary sector organisations
  - Communications through a variety of channels, including the Council's website, media briefings and social media
- 4.40. The Council recognises consultation as a key part of policy formulation and makes considerable effort to ensure that the views of residents, businesses and other key stakeholders are taken into account. Legally, the results of consultation are something that Members must have due regard to in making budget decisions. However, consultation need not legally be the single or even most significant determining factor in choosing between difficult options, although at Brent considerable emphasis is usually placed on the results of consultation.
- 4.41. Brent's constitution includes a section on Business Cases and evaluation of financial implications. This enshrines in the Council's financial regulations the appropriate documented option appraisal methodology used to demonstrate the value for money of the Council's decisions. The section sets out the following requirements:
- 4.42. As part of the evaluation of different options, officers should:
- engage with relevant stakeholders.
  - seek appropriate professional advice.
  - use realistic, evidence based targets (not overly optimistic ones that may not be achievable in practice).
- 4.43. For complex, multiple year option appraisals these appraisals should be undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced staff and comply with the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC)/ Professional Accountants in

Business (PAIB) Project and Investment Appraisal for Sustainable Value Creation guidance.

- 4.44. Complex and/or multi-year option appraisals will also need to consider different scenarios to ensure that the options considered are value for money, and to evaluate the risks that may emerge from foreseeable events. In these cases, this scenario analysis must be clearly summarised and communicated to the relevant decision makers, along with key assumptions made.

*Monitoring financial performance*

- 4.45. To remain financially sustainable an authority must have timely information on its financial and operational performance so that policy objectives are delivered within budget. Early information about emerging risks to its financial sustainability will allow it to make a carefully considered and therefore effective response.
- 4.46. Each quarter a financial forecast report is presented to Cabinet, which sets out the current financial position, highlights the pressures and risks being faced by the Council's services and mitigations being applied where possible. The alignment of the Council's activities with the Council's strategic priorities is also discussed. These reports are then linked to the reports on the Medium-Term financial outlook, the draft budget and the final budget to ensure that ongoing pressures and undeliverable savings are not carried forward as part of an unsustainable budget.
- 4.47. However, in this period of unprecedented uncertainty and pressures on local government finance, this is not enough. That is why the Council created the Budget Assurance Panel to provide further scrutiny and monthly monitoring reports for the Corporate Management Team are being introduced to ensure there is strategic oversight of the emerging risks to the budget at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.48. The Council also undertakes a range of reporting on key performance indicators and benchmarking against other local authorities, which can help to identify problems before they occur, enabling the Council to take preventative actions.
- 4.49. The Deputy Directors of Finance review the balance sheet quarterly with their Heads of Finance and any material risks identified will be flagged to CMT via the quarterly monitoring report.

*External financial reporting*

- 4.50. The Corporate Director, Finance and Resources is the statutory S151 officer. The statutory responsibilities for this role, in addition to those already described in this report, include ensuring that the statement of accounts produced by the local authority complies with the reporting requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.
- 4.51. The Chief Accountant has responsibility for preparing the statement of accounts and is supported by a team of qualified accountants, who are each responsible for ensuring that the accounting in their areas is compliant with the CIPFA Code. However, the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources has ultimate personal responsibility for this and is required to certify that the accounts present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position at the reporting date.

- 4.52. The final outturn figures and variations from the budget as shown in the statement of accounts are also presented to Cabinet in an outturn report, alongside the first quarterly monitoring report of the following financial year and the medium-term financial outlook report. Reporting on these items together allows for the reports to be aligned with each other, ensuring that the backward looking outturn report provides the context behind the present financial position, which in turn informs the medium-term financial outlook, which is forward looking.
- 4.53. These reports proceed to Cabinet via Corporate Management Team meetings, ensuring that where strategic decisions need to be taken quickly and advice provided to members, it is possible to do so before all formal proceedings have been completed. This also maintains the principle that the Corporate Directors are responsible for Financial Management in their services and so must be involved in the preparation of the outturn and the response to it.

## **5. Conclusion and improvement priorities**

- 5.1. As a result of the review undertaken, this report concludes that Brent Council continues to broadly comply with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, although with the financial position becoming increasingly difficult, it is vital that Financial Management is seen as an ongoing activity with involvement from all parts of the organisation.
- 5.2. The Council must continue to demonstrate full commitment to good governance and financial management both now and in the future and embrace change where change is needed to deliver the necessary transformations in service delivery that will ensure the Council's financial position is sustainable in the long-term.
- 5.3. Finally, the Council must commit to enhancing the existing framework of medium-term and long-term planning to deliver on the recommendations from the external auditor's value for money report. The recommendations are set out below:
- As planned, continue to increase the level of useable reserves to offer better protection against financial shocks.
  - Consider introducing Zero-Based Budgeting in targeted service areas to help identify true cost drivers and enable more precise resource allocation and prioritisation, even with limited staff and financial resources.
  - Expand scenario and contingency planning that captures multiple variables simultaneously and also review the current level of reporting to members on the scenarios considered and potential impacts.
  - Update the Finance/MTFS Risk Register more regularly, using it as a live tool to track emerging risks and inform prompt interventions.
  - The Council should ensure it continues to maintain a balanced approach to debt management. Consider reducing overall borrowing levels in the medium to longer term, where possible and commercially viable to do so, to improve the Council's medium and longer term financial sustainability.
  - Continuously review the monitoring regime in place to track savings ensuring that there is a clear plan of action in place if a discrepancy does occur between target and actual savings being achieved.

- Maintain the ongoing monitoring and review of the business plan for i4B to ensure informed decision making and financial sustainability including approaches for managing the debt repayments due to the Council.
- Continue to review the current debt collection strategy to ensure that includes clear targets, performance monitoring, and escalation procedures. Consider investing in specialist training, additional resources or systems to enhance collection rates.
- Consider the integration of the development of climate action plans into the financial budgeting process to help identify any funding gaps and prioritisation of key initiatives to support the delivery of the Council's sustainability goals.
- Continue to monitor the Housing Revenue Account and 30 year plan closely to ensure that it remains sustainable and retains sufficient balances to meet an unexpected overspend or financial shock.

5.4. As part of the Council's ongoing work on developing the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and conducting an annual Financial Resilience Assessment, officers will respond to the findings of the review and provide an update to Cabinet on progress alongside the 2026/27 draft budget in November 2025.

## **6. Financial Considerations**

6.1. There are no cost or budgetary implications arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Considerations**

7.1. None

## **8. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

8.1. None

## **9. Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

9.1. None

## **10. Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)**

10.1. None

## **11. Communication Considerations**

11.1. None

### **Report sign off:**

**Minesh Patel**

Corporate Director of Finance and Resources